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Slocum's injuries are becoming a thing of the past.  
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## High flyin'



JP BEATO III • THE BATTALION

Harlem Globetrotter Curley "Boo" Johnson entertains spectators during the team's performance at Reed Arena on Monday night. The Globetrotters are currently on their 78th consecutive season, 220-game tour of North America. The team's next stop on the tour will be in Waco Tuesday. See more photos on the web.

## Readership program to be tested at A&M

By Carrie Pierce  
THE BATTALION

Newspapers from around the nation and region will soon make their debut at Texas A&M.

USA Today, in a joint effort with the A&M Student Government Association, is bringing the USA Today Collegiate Readership Program to A&M as a pilot test program Feb. 9 through March 2, to see how many Aggies regularly read a regional or national newspaper and if students would be interested in a new free paper distribution system.

According to the USA Today Web site, The Collegiate Readership Program began in 1997 at Pennsylvania State University.

The program will allow students to pick up national, regional and local newspapers from stands and vendors around campus, said Chris Diem, SGA vice president for student affairs and a junior political science major.

"These papers will be given out for free for six weeks," Diem said. "Students will also be asked to fill out a short survey."

Newspapers that will be available include USA Today, The New York Times, The Houston Chronicle, The Bryan-College Station Eagle and The Dallas Morning News, Diem said.

For the trial run, seven vendors will be set up throughout campus.

If students respond well to the pilot program, the papers will be available permanently for free, Diem said.

"USA Today Collegiate is a program that exists through many college campuses including some of our Big 12 counterparts," said Matt Josefy, a senior accounting major and student body president.

Josefy said USA Today approached

### Extra Extra...

USA Today and the Student Government Association are testing a pilot newspaper program that will bring free regional and national papers to campus.

- ▶ Newspapers include:
- USA Today
  - The New York Times
  - The Houston Chronicle
  - The Bryan-College Station Eagle
  - The Dallas Morning News

▶ Trial period is Feb. 9 - March 2

ANDREW BURLESON • THE BATTALION  
SOURCE: SGA

A&M because it ran a similar program in the residence halls a few years ago.

"SGA chose to pursue this because we think it's a service that could benefit students," Josefy said.

The objective of this pilot program is to provide students the opportunity to access papers more easily and become more informed, Diem said.

"This would be a good resource for students here," he said.

Josefy said the program will give students the opportunity to see what is going on in other parts of the nation.

"This gives students an opportunity to pick up a newspaper they wouldn't normally have access to and increase their knowledge of issues," Josefy said.

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## Electrical fire damages 9 stores at Post Oak Mall

By Melissa Sullivan  
THE BATTALION

The cause of a fire that started in a shoe store at Post Oak Mall early Saturday morning has been determined to be electrical, said Bart Humphreys, public information officer for the College Station Fire Department.

Humphreys said CSFD arrived at the mall at 3:51 a.m. after the fire alarm triggered the automatic sprinkler system.

The fire began in the rear of Journey's shoe store at approximately 3:46 a.m. Eight surrounding stores, including Trevor's, Gordon's Jewelers, Wicks-n-Sticks, Victoria's Secret, Coffee Beanery, Aggeland Outfitters, Gadzooks, Wet Seal and six kiosks, had water and smoke damage, Humphreys said.

"We can't tell the exact point of origin, and we can't tell why it started," Humphreys said.

Jack Love, mall general manager, said the fire caused two sprinkler system heads to burst. Love said those were the two that were supposed to go off.

"The fire sprinkler system did what it was supposed to do," he said.

Love said the sprinkler system is designed to contain fires in small areas until the fire department arrives.

The mall has not determined the cost of the damages, Love said. All the stores that were damaged are now open, except Victoria's Secret.

Victoria's Secret is awaiting its corporate company to assess the cost of the damages, Love said.

Anna Arevalo, manager of Trevor's, said the store opened two hours later on Sunday so it could be cleaned.

Arevalo said the most damage was done near the wall adjacent to Aggeland Outfitters because water was seeping under-

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PHOTOS BY: SHARON AESCHBACH • THE BATTALION

Top: Dave McIntyre recently filed with the Republican Party to appear on the March 9 primary ballot. He is a candidate for the 17th congressional district and is running against two other challengers. Above: Dot Snyder is the president of the Waco ISD school board. Right: Arlene Wohlgenuth is a state representative since 1994 and an Aggie mom. All candidates spoke at a Republican Party conference Monday afternoon at the Hilton Hotel in College Station.

## Republican candidates vie to challenge Dem. Edwards

By Anthony Woolstrum  
THE BATTALION

State representatives, judges, commissioners and the sheriff gathered at the Hilton Hotel for lunch Monday afternoon to rally support for the Republican candidates running in the March 15 primary elections.

The Brazos County Republican Club hosted a forum focusing on the District 17 U.S. Congressional candidates and the Court of Appeals candidates.

Each candidate was given three minutes to explain why he was best-suited for his respective office.

The candidate who wins the Congressional primary elections will then proceed to challenge Democrat Chet Edwards, the 14-year incumbent.

"I am running on the principles that I believe define being a conservative, which

are limited government, individual liberties, free enterprise and traditional family values," said Republican representative Arlene Wohlgenuth.

Wohlgenuth is currently the representative for the state district that is encompassed by District 17.

She said campaigning for multiple years from the same geographical area that the incumbent Edwards has run from will give her an edge over the other candidates.

In addition to this, after authoring a bill that saved Texas \$1.1 billion last session, Wohlgenuth said she is best-suited to handle the national debt crisis, which continues to surface as one of the hot issues in this race.

Retired Col. Dave McIntyre said he is the best qualified to handle issues on the national level because he has experience in the field. McIntyre said all of the other candidates have only worked on the state level.

McIntyre graduated from West Point Military Academy with a B.S. in engineering, has received his masters in English and American literature from Auburn University, and received his doctorate in political science from the University of Maryland.

"I'm a strategist. My background is not in politics. I think of longterm issues and how to bring them to bear in the forefront," McIntyre said. "If these issues were easy to solve, then the politicians would have already solved them."

With this philosophy and past experiences, McIntyre said he is prepared to tackle the issues of veteran affairs, military spending and the national debt.

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## SILVER TAPS



Jennifer Wood  
Elementary Education

Brooke Marie Blevins  
Marketing

Tonight  
10:30 p.m.  
Academic Plaza

## Bush proposes \$2.4 trillion budget with huge deficits

By Alan Fram  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — President George W. Bush proposed a \$2.4 trillion budget on Monday slicing scores of programs from prisons to arts education in the face of record federal deficits and the costs of war. His budget chief warned a fresh request for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan could reach \$50 billion.

The election-year blueprint would pour funds into the military, domestic security and some edu-

cation and health initiatives. It provides the first dollars for what ultimately could be a hugely expensive effort to visit Mars, and renews his call for making permanent the tax cuts he has shoved through Congress.

Handcuffed by shortfalls he projects will surge to an unprecedented \$521 billion this year, the spare plan for 2005 offers few dramatic initiatives. It is aimed mostly at familiar Bush priorities like war, terrorism, the economy and struggling schools plus a new goal: Halving the deficit

in five years, which he projects he will achieve with a 2009 shortfall of \$237 billion.

"I'm confident our budget addresses a very serious situation," he said at a Cabinet meeting. "And that is that we are at war and we had dealt with a recession. And our budget is able to address those significant factors in a way that reduces the deficit in half."

Last year's deficit hit \$375 billion, the highest ever in dollar terms. Though Bush projects next year's red ink at \$364 billion, that

excludes U.S. military efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, which White House budget director Joshua Bolten said could hit an "upper limit" of another \$50 billion.

"Hopefully the needs will be less, but it will all depend entirely on the security situation," said Bolten.

Administration officials say that request would come next year — after this November's presidential and congressional elections.

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